

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 /092 W
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R 280544Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4645
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMCONSUL DJIBOUTI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ADDIS ABABA 3988

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PINT, MPOL, ET, FT, SO
SUBJ: MENGISTU SPEECH TO MILITIA

REF: ADDIS ABABA 3953 AND PREVIOUS

SUMMARY: JUNE 25 PROVISIONAL MILITARY ADMINISTRATIVE
COUNCIL (PMAC) CHAIRMAN, LTCOL MENGISTU HAILE-MARIAM
SPEECH TO NEWLY-FORMED PEASANT MILITIA STRONG NATIONALISTIC
APPEAL FOR PRESERVATION OF ETHIOPIAN UNITY AND TERRITORIAL
INTEGRITY. AS FURTHER CONFIRMATION OF MARXIST-LENINIST
DIRECTION OF REVOLUTION, MENGISTU EXPLAINED ETHIOPIA'S
CHOICE OF SOCIALISM TO ACHIEVE JUSTICE AND EQUALITY FOR
ITS BROAD MASSES. IN ONLY DIRECT ATTACK ON SPECIFIC
COUNTRY, MENGISTU ONCE AGAIN WARNED SOMALIA TO RENOUNCE
ITS EXPANSIONIST POLICY TOWARD DJIBOUTI, JUST AS
REVOLUTIONARY ETHIOPIA HAD REPUDIATED PAST HAILE
SELASSIE SUPPORT FOR CONTINUED FRENCH COLONIAL PRESENCE.
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NOTING CURRENT "ACCIDENTAL" CIRCUMSTANCES HAD CONTRIBUTED
TO TEMPORARY AND INSIGNIFICANT GAINS BY OPPONENTS AND
HAD TRIED ETHIOPIAN PATIENCE, MENGISTU STATE PATIENCE
HAD ITS LIMITS AND, "FROM NOW ON OUR HONOR WILL NOT BE
DEFILED OR VILATED". ALTHOUGH SPEECH FORCEFUL CALL TO
ARMS, MENGISTU SPOKE EVENLY, CONFIDENTLY, AND WITH
EMOTIONAL CONTROL. END SUMMARY.

1. FOLLOWING PRESENTATION OF FLAGS TO AND INSPECTION OF VARIOUS MILITARY AND PEOPLE'S MILITIA UNITS, INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES OF SEVEN DIVISIONS OF REGULAR GROUND FORCES, ONE MECHANIZED ARMY DIVISION AND ELEMENTS OF EIGHT DIVISIONS OF PEOPLE'S MILITIA, PMAC CHAIRMAN MENGISTU ADDRESSED ASSEMBLY OF TROOPS, EPMG MINISTERS, DIPLOMATIC CORPS AND OTHER GUESTS AT OLD AIRPORT (LIDETTA) FIELD. MENGISTU COMPARED ETHIOPIA'S CURRENT ENCIRCLEMENT TO THAT OF REVOLUTIONARY RUSSIA 60 YEARS AGO AND SUGGESTED ETHIOPIA TOO WOULD BE ABLE TO BREAK ENCIRCLEMENT AND LIQUIDATE INTERNAL TRAITORS. IN EXPLANATION OF ETHIOPIA'S CHOICE OF SOCIALISM AS GUIDING PRINCIPLE OF REVOLUTION, MENGISTU STATED: "SOCIALISM A SCIENCE NOT A GUESS-WORK OR HYPOTHESIS, THAT DOES AWAY WITH OPPRESSION, EXPLOITATION, COLONIALISM, INDIRECT COLONIAL RULE, AND DIFFERENCE BASED ON SEX, RACE, AND RELIGION." HE CONTINUED, SOCIALISM DOES THIS "ON BASIS OF ABSOLUTE FREEDOM, JUSTICE AND EQUALITY OF BROAD MASSES TO ESTABLISH PEACEFUL AND CLASSLESS SOCIETY BY INTEGRATING OPPRESSED PEOPLES AND WORKERS OF WORLD". LATER IN SPEECH MENGISTU AVERRED ONE OF REASONS "WE WILL BE VICTORIOUS" WAS BECAUSE "WE HAVE TAKEN HOLD OF TORCH OF MARXISM-LENINISM THAT SHOWS AND GUIDES US THE PATH FOR STRUGGLE AND VICTORY."

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2. TURNING TO SOMALIA AND DJIBOUTI INDEPENDENCE, MENGISTU REMARKED SOCIALISM NOT INSTRUMENT FOR IMPOSTERS TO USE TO QUENCH EMPTY EXPANSIONIST AND NATIONALIST THIRST. MENGISTU FURTHER ACCUSED "EXPANSIONIST SOMALI GOVERNMENT" OF ACTS "YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW" WHICH JEOPARDIZE SECURE INDEPENDENCE OF DJIBOUTI, AND CAUTIONED, "OFF IMMEDIATELY WITH YOUR PROVOCATIVE AND POISONOUS HANDS". WHILE SOMALI'S ACTIONS CHARACTERIZED AS "CONTRARY TO AIMS OF COUNTRY CALLING ITSELF SOCIALIST AND NEGATED OBJECTIVE PRINCIPLES," MENGISTU STILL URGED TWO COUNTRIES TO STRUGGLE TOGETHER FOR LASTING DJIBOUTI INDEPENDENCE AND TO COORDINATE STAND AGAINST COMMON ENEMY OF IMPERIALISM.

3. ACKNOWLEDGING JOURNEY TOWARDS PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC ETHIOPIA (PDE) LONG AND HAZARDOUS, MENGISTU AGAIN STATED IT NECESSARY TO ESTABLISH "PROVEN" WORKERS' PARTY AS ONE OF STEPS. (RELIABLE SOURCE NOW REPORTS IT COULD TAKE AT LEAST 4-6 MONTHS TO ESTABLISH PARTY BECAUSE OF MENGISTU PREOCCUPATION WITH MORE PRESSING SECURITY PROBLEMS.) ANOTHER OF MENGISTU'S STEPS TO ACHIEVE PDE IS CREATION OF REVOLUTIONARY PEOPLE'S MILITIA. HE

STATED, MILITIA AND REGULAR FORCES HAVE BEEN ORGANIZED TO "CRUSH COMPLETELY ONCE AND FOR ALL THOSE ELEMENTS LIKE EDU, EPRP, AND REACTIONARY ERITREAN SECESSIONISTS", TO SECURE EVENTUAL PEACE, AND TO CONSOLIDATE GAINS OF ETHIOPIAN BROAD MASSES. FRANKLY ADMITTING "ACCIDENTAL" CIRCUMSTANCES HAD ALLOWED ENEMIES TO GAIN CHEAP, TEMPORARY AND INSIGNIFICANT GAINS, MENGISTU SAID, ETHIOPIAN PATIENCE AND LOVE FOR PEACE HAVE REACHED LIMITS AND THAT FROM NOW ON "OUR HONOR WILL NOT BE DEFILED OR VIOLATED." MENGISTU CONCLUDED ON DRAMATIC AND SOMEWHAT SELF-REVELATORY NOTE, SAYING: "WE WILL STRUGGLE TO THE GRAVE TO ESTABLISH PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC ETHIOPIA, WHERE THIS PROUD NATION WILL LIVE IN HAPPINESS, MASTER OF ITS PRODUCTION AND DESTINY WITHOUT BECOMING OBJECT OF CHARITY (AS MENGISTU WAS IN EARLY LIFE) CONFIDENTIAL

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OR BEING DEPENDENT ON ANYONE (AS MENGISTU WAS) AND FREE FROM ANY KIND OF INFERIORITY IN VIEW OF OTHERS" (ALSO AS MENGISTU HAD BEEN).

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

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SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 IO-13 /092 W

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4. COMMENT: IF ANY DOUBT REMAINED ABOUT IDEOLOGICAL DIRECTION OF ETHIOPIAN REVOLUTION, MENGISTU SPEECH, HAMMER AND SICKLE EMBLEMS ON MILITIA UNIFORM COLLARS, AND HUGE MARX, ENGELS AND LENIN POSTERS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED OVERLOOKING REVOLUTION SQUARE HAVE DISPELLED IT. WHILE MENGISTU REITERATED STRONG ATTACK AGAINST SOMALIA, ITS INTENTIONS TOWARD DJIBOUTI, AND ITS SOCIALIST CREDENTIALS, HE LEFT DOOR OPEN, ALONG SOVIET POLICY LINES, FOR TWO PEOPLES TO STRUGGLE TOGETHER. IT STILL UNCERTAIN WHERE MILITIA FORCES WILL BE SENT INITIALLY, BUT IT INCREASINGLY EVIDENT GOOD PROPORTION WILL GO TO IMMEDIATE PROBLEM AREAS OF OGADEN AND NORTHERN PROVINCES. EIGHT MILITIA DIVISIONS WOULD APPROXIMATE 100,000 MEN, IF ETHIOPIAN PRACTICE OF 12,000-MAN DIVISIONS FOLLOWED. PARTICIPATION BY SEVENTH ARMY DIVISION BELIEVED TO BE FIRST PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ITS EXISTENCE.

5. AS FOR EVENTS THEMSELVES WHICH EVENTUALLY LASTED FOR
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8-1/2 HOURS, THEY WENT SMOOTHLY AND EFFICIENTLY. MILITIA IN FACT WERE BROUGHT IN TO THE CITY EVENING BEFORE AND TRANSPORTED BACK TO CAMP SAME DAY. AS RESULT CURFEW WAS LIFTED SAME EVENING. PARADE BY ALMOST ANY STANDARDS IN THIS PART OF WORLD, WAS IMPRESSIVE. EVERY MILITIAMAN WAS ARMED AND NEATLY UNIFORMED, DISCIPLINE WAS TIGHTLY MAINTAINED, RANKS WENT BY REVIEWING STAND IN GOOD ORDER, AND WE HEARD OF NOT A SINGLE INCIDENT. MILITIAMEN IN FACT GAVE EVERY APPEARANCE OF A WELL-TRAINED, COHESIVE BODY OF FIGHTING MEN DESPITE THEIR LACK OF TRAINING. TIME WILL TELL WHETHER THEY WILL EVER DEVELOP INTO A FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH, BUT 60,000 ARMED AND UNIFORMED MEN IS A LOT OF MEN UNDER ARMS, AND IT WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR INTERESTED PARTIES TO IGNORE THEM.
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Message Attributes

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